United Nations E/CN.9/2009/7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
9 January 2009

Original: English

Commission on Population and Development
Forty-second session
30 March-3 April 2009
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Programme implementation and future programme of work of the Secretariat in the field of population

Programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2008: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report reviews the progress made by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 2008. It covers the activities of the Population Division dealing with the analysis of fertility, mortality and international migration; the preparation of world population estimates and projections; the monitoring of population policies; the analysis of the interrelations between population and development; and the monitoring and dissemination of population information. The report also covers the major activities carried out by the Division, including the substantive servicing of intergovernmental bodies, the preparation of parliamentary documentation and technical publications, the organization of expert meetings and the dissemination of results, including through the Internet.

The objective of the subprogramme on population is to enable the international community to better understand and address effectively current and foreseeable population issues and the population dimensions of development at the national and international levels. The Commission on Population and Development provides the subprogramme with intergovernmental guidance.

The Commission may wish to take note of this report.

* E/CN.9/2009/1.

09-20461 (E) 050209

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I. Introduction

1. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is responsible for the implementation of the subprogramme on population of the United Nations Secretariat. The subprogramme takes account of the recommendations of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the outcome of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly[1] on key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[2] and the outcomes of other relevant international conferences and summits, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration[3] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.[4] It also responds to the resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Population and Development, in particular resolution 2004/1 on the work programme in the field of population, as well as relevant resolutions of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

2. As described in the strategic framework for the period 2008-2009, the objective of the subprogramme on population is to enable the international community to better understand and effectively address current and foreseeable population issues and population dimensions of development at the national and international levels.[5] The Commission on Population and Development provides intergovernmental guidance to the subprogramme.

3. The expected accomplishments for the subprogramme, according to the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/6 (Sect. 9)), are:

(a) Effectively facilitated review by Member States of progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcome of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly;

(b) Enhanced awareness of new and emerging population issues and increased knowledge and understanding, at the national level, particularly in the areas of fertility, mortality, migration, HIV/AIDS, urbanization, population growth and population ageing;

(c) Improved accessibility and timeliness of population information and data for use by Member States, civil society and academia.

4. The Population Division collaborates closely with the agencies, funds, programmes and bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of the work programme and in the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development. United Nations missions, national Government offices, United Nations offices, researchers, media representatives and the public regularly consult the Population Division regarding data, information and analyses on population and development issues.

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[1] General Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex.

[2] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[3] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[4] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[5] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/61/6/Rev.1), programme 7, Economic and Social Affairs, subprogramme 6, Population.

5. The present report focuses on the research and other activities carried out by the Population Division during 2008, grouped by thematic area, and provides a substantive summary of the activities and outputs of the Division, which include the substantive servicing of intergovernmental bodies, the preparation of parliamentary documentation and technical publications, the organization of expert meetings and the dissemination of results, including various forms of outreach through the Internet. A list of activities and outputs is presented in the annex.

II. Fertility and family planning

6. In the area of fertility, the Population Division completed the compilation and revision of two databases: World Fertility Data 2008[6] and World Marriage Data 2008.[7] The databases present both period and cohort indicators of fertility and marriage based on national statistics. Their coverage has been expanded to 224 countries or areas, including all 192 Member States. The database on fertility provides, for each country, five values covering the period 1970-2007 for each of six indicators: total fertility, age-specific fertility rates, mean age at childbearing, number of births, crude birth rate and mean number of children ever born per woman. The database on marriage includes the number of marriages and divorces, the crude marriage rate and the crude divorce rate, the singulate mean age at marriage for both sexes and the distribution of the population by sex and marital status by five-year age group (from 15-19 to 60-64).

7. To document levels and trends of contraceptive use, a wall chart[8] and an Excel data set on CD-ROM[9] have been issued. Both provide the most recent national data available on contraceptive use and the unmet need for family planning for 169 countries or areas, accounting for 99.7 per cent of the global number of women aged 15-49 who are married or in union. They show that contraceptive prevalence among married women of reproductive age has reached 63 per cent at the world level, although it remains low, usually below 20 per cent, in the majority of the least developed countries with data available. There is great variety in the use of the different contraceptive methods among countries and regions. In the more developed regions, the pill and the condom are the most commonly used methods, whereas in the less developed regions, the most popular methods are female sterilization and the intrauterine device (IUD). *World Contraceptive Use 2007* also presents estimates of the pace of change of contraceptive use for countries having carried out between 1985 and 2006 at least two nationally representative surveys of women.

8. The Population Division produces three indicators under the target of universal access to reproductive health of the revised framework for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: (a) contraceptive prevalence rate, (b) adolescent birth rate, and (c) unmet need for family planning. The last-mentioned is produced in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In 2008, the Division provided updated estimates for each of the indicators and their corresponding metadata, including definitions and methods of computation, to the Millennium Development Goals database maintained by the United Nations

[6] POP/DB/FFP/Fert/Rev.2008.

[7] POP/DB/FFP/Mar/Rev.2008.

[8] *World Contraceptive Use 2007* (United Nations publication Sales No. E.08.XIII.6).

[9] POP/DB/CP/Rev.2007.

Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In addition to those indicators, the Population Division has also provided the Millennium Development Goals database with complementary data on prevalence of modern method use, on prevalence of condom use, and on the spacing and limiting components of the unmet need for family planning.

III. Mortality and health

9. In the area of mortality and health, the Population Division convened the Second Coordination Meeting on the Estimation of Adult Mortality at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 31 July 2008. Participants included representatives of key institutions active in the study and estimation of mortality, including relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, offices of the regional commissions, national statistical offices, universities and research organizations. The Meeting reviewed recent progress in methodological developments for estimating mortality in countries with deficient data and identified future directions for research and collaboration. The report of the Meeting is in preparation.

10. At the Meeting, the Population Division presented the results of its efforts to extend the application of the General Growth Balance (GGB) method, which is used to adjust mortality estimates when coverage of deaths is deficient, to cases where international migration is a significant component of population change. This work involved the development of a modified application of the General Growth Balance method and tests of its performance in countries experiencing significant net international migration. In addition, the Division continued its work in developing a two-parameter log-quadratic model life table system by examining how well it fitted mortality above age 60. This evaluation is important because, at current mortality levels, a high proportion of all deaths in most middle-income developing countries already occur above age 60.

11. The Population Division collaborated in the organization and servicing of the high-level event on the Millennium Development Goals which was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 25 September 2008. The Division served as the focal point for the organization of the round table on education and health at the high-level event and led an inter-agency team that collaborated in the preparation of the sections on education and health of the background note by the Secretary-General, of 25 July 2008, entitled "Committing to action: achieving the Millennium Development Goals"[10] and the addendum thereto, of 18 September 2008, entitled "MDG action points"[11] submitted by the Secretary-General to the high-level event. The Division provided the substantive servicing for the round table itself and collaborated in the preparation of the closing statement delivered by the Secretary-General to the event. The high-level event was successful in reaffirming both the political and the financial commitments to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to health and education.

12. During 2008, the Population Division continued to participate actively in the Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, whose objective is to coordinate efforts to monitor progress made towards the achievement of Millennium

[10] http://www.un.org/milleniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/committing.pdf.

[11] http://www.un.org/milleniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/addendum.pdf.

Development Goal 4 regarding the reduction of infant and under-five mortality. The Inter-agency Group had been established in 2004 with the Population Division, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank as members. It is led by UNICEF and WHO. In 2008, the Population Division assisted the Inter-agency Group in the revision and updating of the database on infant and under-five mortality estimates maintained by UNICEF.

13. In order to permit a better assessment of the gender dimensions of child mortality, the Population Division has been undertaking an analysis of the sex differentials in child mortality, producing estimates by sex of infant mortality ($_1q_0$), child mortality ($_4q_1$) and under-five mortality ($_5q_0$) for as many countries as possible. Preliminary results reveal that, as expected because of biological factors, in most countries studied boys are subject to higher risks of dying in childhood than girls; however, the size of the female advantage varies considerably among countries and between the world's major areas. Furthermore, trends in sex differentials also show considerable variation and are not always indicative of outcomes that improve equally for boys and girls. The results of this analysis will yield valuable information for guiding policy development and interventions directed towards the attainment of Millennium Development Goal 4.

14. The Population Division has made substantial progress in the compilation of data suitable for the estimation of mortality, including documentation of data sources. An inventory of data sources is included in "World Mortality Report 2007".[12] The report contains estimates for a number of mortality indicators over the period 1950-2005 for 195 countries or areas with at least 100,000 inhabitants in 2005. The estimates are consistent with the results of *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision*.[13] An analysis of mortality levels and trends for the major areas is presented in the Report, together with an overview of the availability of data relevant to the estimation of mortality. The data contained in the Report have been issued on CD-ROM.[14]

15. In order to facilitate access to the various types of data available for the estimation of mortality, the Population Division, in collaboration with the Department of Demography of the University of California, Berkeley, has been developing a database containing both the basic data needed for mortality estimation and relevant metadata. Data generated by vital registration systems, population surveillance systems, population censuses and surveys are being compiled. A meeting with researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, was held in New York in June 2008 in order to coordinate activities.

IV. International migration

16. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 61/208 and 62/270, the Population Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development (A/63/265), which was considered by the Assembly during its sixty-third session. The report presented, inter alia, options for follow-up to the 2006

[12] ST/ESA/SER.A/281.

[13] *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, CD-ROM Edition: Extended Dataset in Excel and ASCII Formats* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.7).

[14] POP/DB/MORT/2007.

High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development derived from the views submitted by Member States in response to a structured inquiry conducted by the Division. While most of the 64 Member States that responded to the inquiry considered that the Global Forum on Migration and Development, as a voluntary, State-led process, had been a useful outcome of the High-level Dialogue, they also saw the need for follow-up to the Dialogue within the United Nations itself. After considering the options proposed, the Assembly, in its resolution 63/225 of 19 December 2008, decided to hold another high-level dialogue in 2013, following a one-day informal thematic debate to be held in 2011. The report of the Secretary-General also provided an overview of activities on international migration and development undertaken by all relevant bodies, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and other relevant international and regional organizations in follow-up to the Dialogue and assessed efforts by regional and interregional cooperation mechanisms and regional consultative processes to include development considerations in their deliberations or activities on international migration. Pursuant to resolution 62/270, the report was made available to participants in the second meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, held in Manila from 27 to 30 October 2008.

17. The Population Division, in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), organized an Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific, which was held at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok on 20 and 21 September 2008. The meeting considered four themes: (a) international migration trends in Asia and the Pacific in the global context; (b) regional migration policies and cooperation mechanisms; (c) labour migration; and (d) international migration and development. The Meeting brought together international experts and policymakers from countries of origin and destination in Asia and the Pacific, including members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Meeting concluded that: (a) the impact of international migration on host societies depended on the size of the migrant population and varied according to setting; (b) under certain circumstances, governance structures could hamper rather than facilitate regular migration and could even provide incentives to bypass regular channels; (c) circular migration programmes and other programmes of temporary labour migration, while fostering development in countries of origin, were only a partial answer to structural labour shortages in countries of destination; (d) Governments relying on labour migration had to make greater efforts to promote decent work for both their nationals and migrants; (e) remittances provided a safety net to families left behind; (f) the allocation of remittances to consumption, savings or investment should be made freely by migrants and their families, since remittances were their private funds and should not be controlled in any way by Governments; (g) development policies should take account of their potential impact on international migration and of the development effects of migration; and (h) men and women should be afforded the same opportunities to migrate.

18. The Population Division also collaborated with ESCAP in organizing the Asia-Pacific High-level Meeting on International Migration and Development, held at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok, on 22 and 23 September 2008. Representatives of 22 member States of ESCAP and of relevant international organizations, as well as a number of experts serving as resource persons, participated in the High-level Meeting. The Meeting comprised a plenary session and four thematic round tables, which focused on: (a) the role of remittances in development; (b) international

migration and development in countries with special needs; (c) the social dimensions of migration; and (d) migration data and research. Experts made presentations on each of the themes with a view to informing and guiding the ensuing discussion. Participating Member States agreed that remittances had positive impacts on countries of origin and, particularly, on the families that received them. It was suggested that the Governments of the least developed countries, including landlocked and small island States, needed to develop strategies to strengthen linkages with their migrants abroad in order to realize the benefits of migration, particularly by attracting back migrants with needed skills. Participants stressed that providing benefits to returning migrants that were not afforded to citizens who had not migrated was a source of inequities and should be avoided. The importance was underscored of developing programmes designed to train women before they migrated and it was suggested that such training include information about the rights that migrant women should be able to enjoy while abroad. Delegates recognized that data disaggregated by sex and age were essential as a basis for sound policy formulation and called for efforts to exploit all relevant data sources so as to obtain information on their nationals living abroad. In this regard, they stressed the importance of using the 2010 round of population censuses to fill key data gaps and recommended that better use should be made of administrative data sources and surveys to generate information on migrants. Delegates further noted the need to expand research on the impact of international migration on developing countries that already hosted significant numbers of migrants.

19. The Population Division organized the Seventh Coordination Meeting on International Migration, which was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 and 21 November 2008. The Meeting was attended by a total of more than 80 representatives of agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and of other relevant intergovernmental and regional organizations as well as of a number of civil society organizations, including research institutes. The chairpersons of the second and third meetings of the Global Forum on Migration and Development informed participants of the main achievements of the Forum following the holding of its second meeting in Manila and about the plans for the third meeting which would be held in Athens in November 2009. The Meeting continued with a discussion of follow-up to the 2006 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, an exchange of information on current and planned activities on international migration and development, and a preliminary assessment of the impact of the financial crisis on international migration and remittance flows.

20. In response to the growing demand for data on international migrants, the Population Division had developed the United Nations Global Migration Database,[15] which is accessible on a password-protected Internet site. The database includes the most complete set of data on the stock of international migrants classified by origin, sex and age at the national level. Depending on national data sources, country of origin is reported in terms either of country of birth or of country of citizenship. The data are derived mostly from censuses or, in some cases, from population registers. The database allows users to download the information available on a particular country of origin or a particular country of destination. The Division is using the data compiled in the database to derive global estimates of the

[15] http://esa.un.org/unmigration/.

migrant stock classified by age and sex. Analysis of the data by both country of origin and country of destination is being carried out in collaboration with the World Bank. UNICEF and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have provided financial support for the development of the database. The United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank, the University of Sussex and the Minnesota Population Center (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series-International (IPUMS-International)) have been important sources of the basic data included in the database.

21. As part of its work on the estimation of levels and trends of international migration, the Population Division has issued the 2008 Revision of Trends in Total Migrant Stock[16] on CD-ROM. This Revision provides estimates of the number of international migrants by sex at the start of each quinquennium, beginning in 1960 and ending with a projected figure for 2010, for each of 234 countries or areas.

22. With support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Population Division has continued to provide support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, who is the main link between the United Nations and the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

23. During 2008, the Population Division continued to provide substantive support to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs in his capacity as member of the Global Migration Group, a consultative mechanism constituted by the heads of 12 agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, a representative of the regional commissions and the head of the International Organization for Migration. In 2008, the Global Migration Group produced a joint report on international migration and human rights[17] to which the Division had contributed by providing input on the importance of migration data for assessing the status of respect for human rights.

V. World population projections

24. The preparation of biennial population estimates and projections for all countries and areas of the world is a key part of the mandate of the Population Division. The results of this activity have considerable impact both inside and outside the United Nations system. The official United Nations population estimates and projections, as well as the urban and city projections, are key inputs for several analytical reports prepared by the Division, such as *World Population Ageing*, the *World Fertility Report*, the *World Mortality Report* and the *World Migration Report*. In addition, key publications on data and indicators prepared by entities of the United Nations system use as input the official United Nations population estimates and projections prepared by the Division. Those entities relying on population data generated by the Division include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP,

[16] POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008.

[17] Global Migration Group, *International Migration and Human Rights: Challenges and Opportunities on the Threshold of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York, United Nations Population Fund, October 2008).

UNFPA, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Bank. Researchers, academics and the media also make ample use of the Division's population estimates and projections.

25. In 2008, the Population Division issued the results of the 2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects in the publication entitled "Highlights of World Urbanization Prospects: the 2007 Revision".[18] The data have been made available via an interactive online database[19] as well as in two wall charts, one entitled *Urban and Rural Areas 2007*[20] and the other, *Urban Agglomerations 2007*.[21] Detailed data on urban and rural areas (Dataset 1) and on urban agglomerations (Dataset 2) from *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision* were released on CD-ROM.[22] According to the 2007 Revision, the world urban population will likely increase by 3.1 billion, from 3.3 billion to 6.4 billion, between 2007 and 2050. The expected rise in the urban population surpasses that for the whole world population over the same period (2.5 billion), implying that urban areas are expected to absorb not only all the population growth expected over the next four decades but also some of the rural population through rural-urban migration or through the transformation of rural settlements into urban centres. As a result, the world rural population is projected to start decreasing in about a decade and 0.6 billion fewer rural inhabitants are expected in 2050 compared with today (representing a decline from 3.4 billion in 2007 to 2.8 billion in 2050).

26. In early 2008, the Population Division issued two volumes of the *2006 Revision of World Population Prospects: Comprehensive Tables* (vol. I)[23] and *Sex and Age Distribution of the World Population* (vol. II).[24] The *Analytical Report* (vol. III) is under preparation and will be released in 2009. These volumes present or analyse the population estimates and projections for 229 countries or areas of the world over the period 1950-2050. In addition, a wall chart entitled *World Population 2006*[25] was released early in 2008.

27. The Population Division continued its work on the development of a database, DemoData, that integrates all empirical data relevant to the preparation of the biennial revisions of *World Population Prospects*. During 2008, the design of the database structure was completed and records from existing databases were imported. Currently, DemoData contains nearly 20 million data records. During 2008, a graphical user interface for DemoData was developed, making possible the commencement of its use in the preparation of the forthcoming *2008 Revision of World Population Prospects*.

28. The Population Division collaborated with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), ESCAP, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the

[18] ESA/P/WP/205.

[19] http://esa.un.org/unup/index.asp.

[20] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.13.

[21] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.12.

[22] POP/DB/WUP/Rev.2007.

[23] *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision*, vol. I, *Comprehensive Tables* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.2).

[24] *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision*, vol. II, *Sex and Age Distribution of the World Population* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.3).

[25] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.3.

Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), UNFPA, UNESCO and WHO by sharing with these bodies the preliminary results of the 2008 Revision of World Population Prospects in order to allow them to comment on those results. In addition, the Division provided those entities with technical information on the preparation of the estimates and projections produced and prepared special sets of estimates designed to satisfy their requests.

29. The Population Division also cooperated with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities in leading the Task Team on Population Estimates. In that role, the Division organized a meeting of the Task Team on 19 and 20 May 2008, which was held via teleconference connecting New York with Bangkok, Santiago and Geneva. The Division drafted the background paper for the meeting reviewing issues and practices in the use of population estimates by international organizations. The Division also prepared the report presented by the Task Team to the Committee at its twelfth session, held in Tunis on 11 and 12 September 2008 (SA/2008/10 of 8 September 2008).

VI. Population policies

30. In order to monitor the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and other internationally agreed development goals that are related to population, including the relevant Millennium Development Goals, the Population Division launched, in 2008, the United Nations Tenth Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development. The Inquiry, which was sent to all permanent missions to the United Nations in New York in 2008, requests Governments to furnish information on their views and policies with respect to a wide array of population and development issues. For the first time, the Inquiry was also made available in an online version. During 2009 and 2010, the responses to the Inquiry will be analysed and the results incorporated in a number of publications issued by the Population Division, including *World Population Policies 2009*.

31. In the area of international migration policy, the Population Division initiated a study on government structures relevant for the governance of international migration. To that end, the Division developed a framework for describing the comprehensive set of potential interactions between government entities and international migrants, such as those pertaining to the issuance of visas and permits, the granting of asylum and citizenship, the preparation of migrants for emigration, and the management of the social and economic aspects of migration. Based on that framework, the Division has compiled information on the Government entities that are actually involved in the management of migration in over 100 countries. On the basis of this information, the Division will analyse the diversity of Government structures involved in the management of immigration, emigration and migrant affairs and relate those findings to efforts under way to improve coherence in the management of migration for the benefit of development.

32. In order to raise awareness among Governments about the importance of population trends for the achievement of the universally agreed development goals, the Population Division organized an expert panel on "The contribution of population policy to the achievement of the internationally agreed development

goals, including the Millennium Development Goals" which was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 December 2008. The panellists documented the varied population trends that characterize the world regions today and related them to differences in the efforts made by Governments to develop and implement population policies, particularly in relation to family planning. High population growth is prevalent today in most of the least developed countries and, if continued, will remain an obstacle for the attainment of key development goals, especially the reduction of poverty and hunger. Panellists argued that the large gap between existing donor funding for family planning and that called for in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development was an important factor hampering efforts to moderate population growth in poor countries.

VII. Population and development

33. The Population Division organized the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development, held in New York from 21 to 23 January 2008. The objective of the Meeting was to discuss the implications of the unprecedented scale of the urbanization of the world population. The Meeting brought together 57 experts to present their views and discuss the patterns, causes and implications of the changing spatial distribution of the population in different parts of the world. The Meeting considered the following issues: (a) the effects of the sustained and rapid urbanization of the world population, particularly for developing countries; (b) the policy implications of the fact that, in the majority of developing countries, urban population growth is driven mostly by natural increase and not, as is usually thought, by rural-urban migration; (c) the economic linkages between urban and rural areas; (d) the high prevalence of poverty in rural areas; (e) the rapidly increasing numbers of urban poor; (f) the impact of urbanization on the environment; and (g) ways of improving the living conditions of both urban and rural dwellers. The proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development[26] have been published.

34. The Population Division has produced estimates of the urban and rural populations in the 175 countries with more than 300,000 inhabitants in 2005 for the beginning of each quinquennium in the period 1950-2005. The estimates have been issued in digital form on a CD-ROM entitled "Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005".[27] A report discussing levels and trends of world urbanization by age and sex is in preparation. Preliminary findings indicate that, globally, the proportion of children in rural areas is lower than that of middle-aged adults. Males tend to be more urbanized than females. In developing countries, a higher proportion of older persons than of adults of working age live in rural areas. Generally, the urban population is more advanced than the rural population in the ageing process, especially in developing countries.

35. The Population Division collaborated with ECLAC in undertaking applied research on population ageing, intergenerational transfers and social protection in five Latin American countries, in the context of the international research project on

[26] ESA/P/WP.206.

[27] POP/DB/PD/URPAS/2008.

national transfer accounts encompassing 25 countries from all major regions of the world. The research progressed significantly during 2008, with all participating countries having produced a full set of estimates of transfer accounts for at least one year. Furthermore, each country has prepared a technical paper on the estimates of intergenerational transfers and their socio-economic implications. The Division assisted the efforts of UNFPA to use the results of this research in a programme designed to strengthen the capacities of developing countries to assess the implications of changing age structures and thus guide policy formulation and development planning.

36. In 2008, the Population Division issued a CD-ROM entitled World Population Ageing 2007,[28] which includes a digital version of the printed volume of the same title published in 2007.[29] The CD-ROM also contains Excel files with all the data presented in the regional and country profiles contained in the published report.

37. In order to provide information for the assessment of the impact of urbanization and the challenges faced by rural populations, the Population Division published two wallcharts in 2008, one entitled *Urban Population, Development and the Environment 2007*[30] and the other, *Rural Population, Development and the Environment 2007*.[31] The wallcharts show that, in 2005, urban settlements occupied 2.7 per cent of the world's land area, yielding an average urban population density of 906 persons per square kilometre (km²) of urban land area. In rural areas, the density of agricultural labour in 2004 had been 90 agricultural workers per km² of cropland. The population density of urban settlement is lower in the more developed regions (482 persons per km²) than in the less developed regions (1,381 persons per km²). Although in most countries and regions, industry and services predominate, agriculture still generates a sizeable share of total output in developing countries. Thus, it accounts for over half of Africa's gross domestic product (GDP). Per capita energy use is 5 times higher in the more developed regions than in the less developed regions and more than 15 times higher in the more developed regions than in the least developed countries. However, because future population growth will take place mostly in developing countries, increases in energy consumption and emissions will also take place primarily in those countries.

38. Rapid population growth during the twentieth century resulted in a major extension of agricultural land. Currently, 12 per cent of the global land area is occupied by cropland and an additional 26 per cent by permanent pastures. Population growth and increased consumption are associated with rapid deforestation, mainly through conversion of forests into agricultural land. Since the 1990s, the pace of net forest loss appears to have decreased slightly, with Asia showing even a stabilization of forest area and Europe and Northern America showing net gains in forest area. The regions experiencing the greatest recent loss of forest area are Africa, which is characterized by very rapid population growth, and Latin America and the Caribbean, where the pace of population growth, though declining, was, during the past two decades, also rapid.

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[28] POP/DB/WPA/Rev.2007.

[29] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.5.

[30] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.7.

[31] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.10.

VIII. Monitoring, coordination and dissemination of population information

A. Monitoring of population trends and policies

39. The report of the Secretary-General on world population monitoring is prepared annually by the Population Division for Submission to the Commission on Population and Development. The 2008 report (E/CN.9/2008/3) was devoted to population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development, the special theme for the forty-first session of the Commission.

40. The world population monitoring report prepared by the Population Division for the forty-second session of the Commission (E/CN.9/2009/3) focuses on the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

B. Dissemination of population information and data

41. During 2008, the Population Division continued to update and expand its website in order to provide timely access by Government officials and civil society to population information. The Population Division's website provides access to most publications issued by the Division, usually well in advance of their availability in printed form. Postings on the website include highlights, key findings, papers presented at meetings, proceedings of meetings, population reports, wallcharts, data sets and interactive databases. The site also provides information about the Commission on Population and Development, including the official documentation for its sessions and guidance for non-governmental organizations wishing to participate in the work of the Commission. Traffic statistics indicate that in 2008 the Division's website was visited by some 4,600 users per day, generating approximately 4 million page views for the year.

42. The Population Division also maintains a website focusing exclusively on international migration (http://www.unmigration.org). This website serves as a portal containing links to the numerous international migration activities closely related to the work of the Division, both within and outside the United Nations system, and, as such, includes, inter alia, links and references to the activities of the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

43. The Population Division is responsible for maintaining the website of the United Nations Population Information Network (POPIN), although extrabudgetary funding for the project ceased several years ago. The Network is a portal to the population information and data available throughout the United Nations system. Analysis of traffic to the website shows that the Network remains a well-established brand name and is a useful channel for the dissemination of the population information generated by the United Nations system, with the number of visits having totalled close to 150,000 in 2008.

44. The Population Division continued to use its e-mail announcement service to alert subscribers to important news, events and developments concerning Division activities. The service has currently over 1,700 subscribers from all over the world.

Information on Division activities and outputs of particular relevance to developing countries is also distributed regularly to persons and institutions included in various mailing lists.

45. MORTPAK for Windows, the Population Division's software package for demographic estimation, continued to be distributed, mainly among analysts in developing countries who use it for teaching or research purposes.

IX. Technical cooperation

46. The focus of the Population Division's regular programme of technical cooperation is on building and strengthening capacity in developing countries to analyse demographic information needed to guide the formulation and implementation of population policy. During 2008, the Division conducted a survey among governmental units engaged in demographic analysis to determine which areas were most in need of capacity development. The survey indicated that many developing countries lacked the human resources to conduct in-depth demographic analysis. The results of the survey are being used to develop a cost-effective strategy for supporting the building of analytical capacity in developing countries.

47. The Population Division's technical cooperation programme continued to support the development of an innovative web-based multilingual demographic dictionary, "Demopaedia", whose capacity to promote collaborative work across borders in different languages is being tested.

48. The Population Division responded to a request by the Government of Colombia to provide technical backstopping for the Forum on Population and Environment: Challenges Facing Small Oceanic States, which was convened in San Andrés, Colombia, from 23 to 27 August 2008. The Forum brought together 120 participants from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Government officials, local administrations and community leaders, who discussed the relevance of population dynamics to ensuring the environmental sustainability of small islands.

49. The Population Division collaborated with UNFPA by providing technical support to the International Conference on the Effects of Migration on Population Structures in Europe, organized by the Vienna Institute of Demography/International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and held in Vienna on 1 and 2 December 2008, and to the subsequent UNFPA Meeting on Migration and its Implications for Development and Population Change in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region, held in Vienna on 3 December 2008.

Annex

Publications, expert group meetings and other materials prepared or organized by the Population Division (1 January-31 December 2008)[a]

Expert group meetings

United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development, New York, 21-23 January 2008

Second Coordination Meeting on the Estimation of Adult Mortality, New York, 31 July 2008

Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 20 and 21 September 2008

Seventh Coordination Meeting on International Migration, New York, 20 and 21 November 2008

Expert panel on "The contribution of population policy to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals", New York, 15 December 2008

Research studies

World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, vol. I, *Comprehensive Tables* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.2)

World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, vol. II, *Sex and Age Distribution of the World Population* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XIII.3)

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision: highlights (ESA/P/WP.205)

Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development, New York, 21-23 January 2008 (ESA/P/WP.206)

Databases

Trends in Total Migrant Stock: the 2008 Revision (POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008)

Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005 (POP/DB/PD/URPAS/2008)

World Urbanization Prospects: the 2007 Revision: Dataset 1: Urban and rural areas; and Dataset 2: Urban agglomerations (POP/DB/WUP/Rev.2007)

World Population Ageing 2007 (POP/DB/WPA/Rev.2007)

World Fertility Data 2008 (POP/DB/FFP/Fert/Rev.2008)

World Marriage Data 2008 (POP/DB/FFP/Mar/Rev.2008)

World Contraceptive Use 2007 (POP/DB/CP/Rev.2007)

[a] Not including reports issued as parliamentary documentation.

Wallcharts

World Population 2006 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.3)

World Contraceptive Use 2007 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.6)

Urban Population, Development and the Environment 2007 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.7)

Rural Population, Development and the Environment 2007 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.10)

Urban Agglomerations 2007 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.12)

Urban and Rural Areas 2007 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XIII.13)

Periodicals

Population Newsletter, No. 84 (December 2007)[b]

[b] Covering the period from July to December 2007.